



Vaccinations help prevent the flu

ON AVERAGE, seasonal flu causes millions of Americans to miss work and school, hospitalizes about 200,000 Americans, and results in about 36,000 deaths every year.

The seasonal flu vaccine protects against flu strains that normally cause the most illness during the flu season. However, it will not protect you from the new H1N1 influenza.

You should be vaccinated against both to get maximum protection.

Mandatory immunization. All active duty military personnel and DoD employees with specific work requirements should receive the seasonal flu vaccine, unless they have certain medical conditions.

An H1N1 vaccine is being distributed in October and will also be required for all active duty military personnel and DoD employees with specified work requirements. Look for updated information in newspapers, websites, and media reports about how it will be distributed.

CDC especially encourages the following to get the H1N1 flu vaccine, when available:

- people with underlying health conditions like asthma or diabetes
- health care workers
- pregnant women
- caregivers for infants under six months of age,
- children and young adults from six months to 24 years of age
- Adults, 25 - 64 years old, whose health conditions include higher risk of complications from influenza



Practice good hygiene habits and other preventive health precautions.

- **Cover your nose and mouth** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it, or sneeze in your sleeve.
- **Wash your hands often and thoroughly**, with soap and water, especially after coughing and sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.** Clean regularly, knobs, telephones and items that many people use or touch. Germs spread this way.
- **Try to avoid close contact with sick people.**
- **If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay at home**, to prevent others from getting sick. Stay away from other people for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, after you have stopped using any fever-reducing medicine. Health care workers should remain on home isolation for seven days.

